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Echoes of the Great

Blanche Finkle Gile



ECHOES OF THE GREAT

By

BLANCHE FINKLE GILE



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PROLOGUE

I like a verse, I like a rhyme,
I love sweet singers of all time;
And harmonies, unique, sublime,
Send quivers up and down my spine;
And lofty thoughts, ideals divine,
Inspire this struggling soul of mine;
Oh, would that Immortality
Might spare a meager crown for me!

Alas, my Pegasus is lame!
I humbly echo others fame
And pray your grace. Mayhap my part
Will warm your love for greater art.

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ECHOES OF THE GREAT

"GOING WEST"

Turmoil and stricken truth,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no mourning if my youth
Is lost that Right shall be.

For tho' the smoke and mist of cannon roll
May cloud my mortal eyes,
I catch the Vision of the gleaming goal
That "somewhere" lies.

Tumult and frantic fight,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no faltering of the Light
When bullet finds its mark.

And if my star shall lead from Time and Place
To that eternal quest,
I hope to see my captain face to face
When I "go West".

LITTLE BOY BLUE

My Little Boy Blue went away in a ship
So sturdy and staunch and smart;
I told him good bye with a smile on my lip
That covered an aching heart.

Time was when as all lovers do,
We'd planned for a snug little nest;
But that was before my little Boy Blue
And his ship sailed out of the West.

"Now wait, dear heart, 'till I come," said he,
"And don't you worry or sigh;
For I'll be back from over the sea
In the golden bye and bye."

Alas, the great grey water wolf
Came out of his lair in the deep
And sprang at the throat of the gallant boat!
And a woman can only weep.

My Little Boy Blue has gone to his rest
And his tomb is the moaning main;
For the ship that so proudly sailed out of the West
Will never make harbor again!

I wonder and wait, and the years look long,
And I hope, in my pain, they'll be few;
I wonder, and hark for the angel's song
That called to my little Boy Blue.

"YANKEE DOODLE"

"What is that rumblin' roar I hear?" said Hindenburg the Red.

"It's Yankee foemen drawing near," the Avenging Angel said.

"Why shake my front ranks in their place?" said Hindenburg the Red.

"They're dreading what they've got to face," the Avenging Angel said.

For they're playing Yankee Doodle an' they're straight like Yankee pine,

An' there's grim determination in every khaki line.

An' they've started off as winners, an' they're headed for the Rhine,

For the Freedom of the Nations is a-bornin'.

"What casts that shadow o'er the Hun?" said Hindenburg the Red.

"A wing-ed host against the sun," the Avenging Angel said.

"What is that throb across the deep?" said Hindenburg the Red.

"The building of a mighty fleet," the Avenging Angel said.

For they're coming thro' the Heavens and they're coming o'er the strand,

An' they're going to see the finish of your murder-in' thievin' band.

For they know they fight for Righteousness as well as Native Land,

An' the Freedom of the Nations that's a-bornin'.

LITTLE HARRY GARFIELD

Little Harry Garfield's come to our house to stay,
To make us shut the dampers up, an' brush the
soot away,
An' clean the ashes off the grate, 'cause ashes kill
the heat,
An' sort 'em out, an' pick 'em out, and what aren't
burned to keep.
An' all the family gather, when the supper things
is done,
An' feed em' to the kitchen fire, to beat the fiendish
Hun,
An' prattle of the Shortage, the papers tell about,
An' the Jack Frost 'at gits you
When the Coal

Gives

Out.

An' little Harry Garfield says when the sky is blue,
'En the sun's a-sending heat, F. O. B. to you,
That when the shadows deepen an' the day is gray,
It's time to draw the curtains to keep the cold away.
You'd better shut off all the rooms, 'cept where
people is,
An' folks 'ill know, 'at sees you, you're tendin' right
to biz.
An' put in smaller 'lectric bulbs, or Mazdas, all
about,
'Er Jack Frost 'ill git you
If the Coal

Gives

Out.

Echoes of the Great

Wunst there wuz a woman, a careless, saucy dame,
Who wouldn't sift her ashes, or mend a window
frame,

An' would heat up all the water, an' let it run away,
An' jeer at them who tried to save a shovel-full
aday.

An' when her bin was empty, they wouldn't heed
her call,

An' when they went to find her, she wuzn't there
at all.

An' all they ever found wuz, some chunks of ice
about,

'Cause Jack Frost had got her

When her

Coal

Gave

Out.

An' one time a selfish man wuz full of greed and
sin,

An' didn't care for no one but filled chock full
his bin.

When told of cold and suffrin' the poor folks had
to bear,

He mocked 'em and shocked 'em

An' said he didn't care.

An' just as he was telling, as 'ow he'd ordered more,

He saw two great big black men go in his cellar
door.

An' they carried off his hoardings,

'Fore he know'd what he's about,

An' Jack Frost 'ill git him

When his

Coal

Gives

Out.

NOTHIN' TO SAY

Nothin' to say, my laddie!
Nothin' at all to say!
Boys that has pluck, I've noticed, ginerly has their
way!
Yer grand dad did, afore you, 'way back in sixty-
one—
I reckon it's bred right in you to want a whack at
the Hun!

You look lots like yer grand dad:
Same glint about the eyes,
As if you'd liketo tackle a man' bout twice yer size:
Like him, too, about fightin'—he loved the thick
of the fray:
And now yer off to the trenches!
But I hain't got nothing to say!

Of course, you can't be drafted,
Yer sceercely past eighteen;
But ye'll make as fine a soldier as any man I've seen.
I'll be most mighty lonesome, but lad if you can't
stay,
Why go, and God go with you!
I've nothin' at all to say!

THE SERVICE STAR OF HUMANITY

Thou blessed star of Bethlehem,
Oh, guide us thro' the night;
The Christ is born in hearts of men
And lives to guard the Right!

Thou Star of Hope. Again the earth
Hangs breathless on thy fate:
Thy olden tale of Jesus' birth
Is strength to us who wait.

For tho' from out our chosen ways
Thy gleam may call us far,
We'll learn anew in trying days
The Message of the Star.

Oh, we will follow where you lead
And make our altar there,
We'll leave behind our selfish need
To bring a smile and prayer.

"Unto the End," we take the vow:
Nor shun our share of loss
If at the end we find that Thou
Hath led us to the Cross!

ARBUTUS

Pink as a virgin's blush is;
White as a baby's brow;
Starry as dawn's first flush is;
Sweet as a lover's vow.

Sleeping with Life's spark hidden;
Stirring in Spring's soft bliss;
Thus does the heart of a maiden
Startle at Love's first kiss.

Bearing a promise of rapture;
Consummation to come;
Sunshine and children's laughter;
Nature's hustle and hum.

Oh, wonderful little flower,
Thy chalice of delicate hue
Holds all the mysterious power
That quickens old earth anew.

HUMPTY DUMPTY

He lightly threw my heart away,
A shattered crimson toy it lay;
And the seething love with which it was filled
On the ground around was hopelessly spilled;
For all the King's horses and all the King's men
Can't put broken hearts back together again.

TIMES HAVE CHANGED

Last year I went to bed at night
By cheerful twenty-candle light;
This summer quite the other way
I must retire by light of day.

I must retire that I may rise
Before the sun ascends the skies;
And by this comprehensive plan
I amplify my little span.

I save the fuel for future power
To luminate a darker hour;
Else winter's glim may be perchance
The light shed by my countenance!

WAR'S LESSONS

There! little girl; don't cry!
They have taken your boy, I know;
 Tho' your heart is blue,
 Be a soldier, too,
For the way is hard to go;
But battle clouds will soon pass by.
There! little girl; don't cry!

There! little girl; don't cry!
They have brought you sad news, I know;
 For your lover died
 With a hero's pride,
And the way seems hard to go;
But pain will cease in the bye and bye.
There! little girl; don't cry!

There! little girl; don't cry!
They have broken your heart, I know;
 And your dreams of joy
 Have gone with your boy
And are things of the long ago:
But heaven holds all for which you sigh.
There! little girl; don't cry!

TO MY ROSE IN OLD VERMONT

Oh, sad am I across the sea
A-longing for my Rosalie;
Though other Jacks love other Jills
In greater or in less degree,
There is no other girl for me
But you my darling Rosalie!

I know you'll keep my memory
As verdant as a leaving tree
By our dear native rills;
And I will be your devotee
Through time and all eternity,
My neatest, sweetest Rosalie!

And when we've won the victory
The wings of love will carry me
To those Green Mountain hills;
They say that men will all be free;
But I shall be a slave to thee,
My Sovereign Queen, my Rosalie!

THE FOOL

A Fool there was and her prayer she gave

(Even as you and I)!

To the form of a God and the soul of a slave

(We called him the man with the heart of a knave),

But the fool called him her gallant brave

(Even as you and I)!

And the fool poured forth with lavish hand

(Even as you and I)!

Spirit and flesh at his demand

And pled for love as a poor fool can

(And that wasn't at all what the gallant planned),

But a fool of course cannot understand

(Even as you and I)!

And the fool was stripped and cast aside

(Even as you and I)!

A derelict at the will of the tide—

(But it isn't on record the gallant sighed),

And the shell of her lived but the soul of her died—

(Even as you and I)!

Oh the ache of a heart and the break of a heart

And the wreck of a future planned,

For the sake of the man who would not share

(And then she knew that he did not care)

And never could understand.

Echoes of the Great

And the name of it all and the blame of it all
And the shame of the Scarlet brand,
Belonged to the woman who did not know
(And because she loved she could not know)
The faithless heart of the man.

But it wasn't the pain, the stain, or the shame
That conquered the spirit brave.
'Twas coming to know, as she came to know
(And seeing at last she must come to know)
That her Knight was only a Knave.

Echoes of the Great

SPRING OWED

In the Spring the shops' show-windows lure with
garments fresh and new;

In the Spring the Easter Bonnets emulate the rain-
bow's hue;

In the Spring all Femininity blossoms like the crim-
son rose;

In the Spring a woman's fancy turns to thoughts
of classy clothes.

THE PROFITEER

(FORTY YEARS HENCE)

A little girl climbed on her granddaddy's knee
And pleaded, "Oh, tell a true story to me."
She wheedled and teased as a little girl can
To hear him live over the war days again.

So he told her of gallant and glorious fight;
Of the Nation's response to the call of the right;
Of brave mothers and sisters and sweethearts and
wives;
Of the flower of young manhood who poured out
their lives
That the world might be safe when the conflict was
done,
And men keep the freedom their fathers had won.

Then she wistfully queried, "And what did you do,
I think that the man who was bravest was you?"
The grandfather gazed 'round the elegant room,
Whose luxury seemed like a symbol of doom.
He regretted the past for he felt he was old
And the fire of desire was expiring and cold.

He thought of his end in a humpety hole,
Too small for his body, but large for his soul,
And he made no reply as he stifled a sigh,
But he lowered his head at the look in her eye,
For he knew in his heart that the arrow had hit.
He had done the poor people instead of his bit!

A DISSERTATION

The poets sing of love, sweet love, with verse they
are prolific,

But I would lift my lilt to love in terms most scientific.

"That true, true love will never die", this error
they are teaching,

"And absence fonder makes the heart" the tenet
they are preaching;

But I argue controversially, that in almost every
instance,

"Love varies, quite inversely, as the cubic of the
distance."

But before I hasten to a further exposition

I'll state my views concisely in a simple definition.

Love is a trick, camouflage if you please,

A snare of Dame Nature's (a trap set with cheese),

That, thinly dissembled with moonshine and vapors,

Enveigles young folks into all sorts of capers.

Thus benighted individuals who lack sophistication

Are guided to the altar for the sake of propagation.

The State of Matrimony is a most "specific cure,"

But a "counter irritation" is very near as sure.

On this very complex topic, to get a clear relation,

I'll epitomize my spasm in a recapitulation;

Thus falling deep in love is an "awfully simple"
jump,

But falling out again is a "simply awful" bump.

WILHELM THE KAISER, AND THE
ANGEL

Wilhelm the Kaiser (may his tribe die out) !
Awoke one night in a great state of doubt,
(For things were not running as smooth as might
be

In the vaunted Concern of "Himself and Al-
mighty") !

And saw within the twilight in his room,
Seeming to him like a forecast of doom,
An angel, writing in the Book of Death.
Exceeding nerve gave Kaiser Wilhelm breath,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?"—The vision raised its head,
And with a look full of grief and discord,
Answer'd, "The names of those who deny the
Lord."

"And is mine one?" said Wilhelm. "Nay, not
yet,"

Replied the angel. Wilhelm ceased to fret,
And proudly spoke, "Write me, I pray thee, then,
As one who denies the brotherhood of men."

The Angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a glaring crimson light,
And show'd the names whom hate of God had
cursed

And lo! the name of Wilhelm was the first.

APRIL FOOL

Von Hindenburg, he said he'd dine
And drink his fill of Paris wine
In state on All Fool's day.
He must have misconstrued the sign
Some fifty miles away.

Von Hindenburg, he made his brag
He'd carry off the victor's swag
And make the Allies pay.
And yet he has begun to flag
At fifty miles away.

Now April Fool is in the past
So he's the biggest fool at last
He lost his leading play.
While Yankee boys are coming fast
He's fifty miles away.

And when the Powers in council wait
Von Hindenburg will fail his date.
And on that blissful day
They'll pass him up an empty plate
Some hundred miles away.

EPILOGUE

Instead of Paris wine, I ween
He'll drink his fill of Paris green!

MY MASTERPIECE

While in a wondrous merry mood,
I wrote a little skit;
I thought it was exceeding good
And sure to make a hit,
Said I, "I'll try it on the dog,
Before I publish it."

I read it to the coal man,
To test the matter out
According to my little plan,
He burst into a shout;
He whooped and roared and whooped again,
And started on the run,
And took in his departing van
My precious half a ton.

I read it to the grocer's boy:
At first he grew a grin;
The second line, he swelled with joy:
The third, he lost his chin;
The fourth, his vest began to crack,
He turned a purple hue,
And tumbled in a fit. Alack,
My sugar tumbled, too!

Echoes of the Great

I read it to my better half,
A sober man is he;
It would be queer, if he should laugh,
And queer it seemed to be.
He broke into a lusty roar
And doubled up in glee,
And dropped upon the hardwood floor
The baby on his knee!
Thus every time, my foolish rhyme
Brought dire calamity.

So I am forced by bitter need
To hide my brightest light;
Since then, I never dare to read,
The funny things I write.



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